

Eddie Sleeper

From: L Hearsch <lhearsch@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 29, 2018 2:08 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for 1/30/2018 House Energy Policy Committee - DTE Shut Off Threats and Customer Related Problems
Attachments: Linda Letters from DTE_20180115_0001.pdf

Date: January 29, 2018

Re: Testimony for 1/30/2018 House Energy Policy Committee - **DTE Shut Off Threats and Customer Service Related Problems**

From: **Linda Hearsch**, Sandusky, Michigan, Sanilac County

Dear Mr. Sleeper:

Thank you for making this testimony part of the record.

Sincerely,

Linda Hearsch

Thumbnail Summary:

- DTE discriminates against customers who wish to keep an analog meter and treats its captive customers poorly as it threatens to shut off power at my home. **The rules say DTE is not supposed to discriminate against its customers.**
- Our bills have been paid in full every month for years. We simply want to pay our bills and receive power without complications, added programs, harassment, discrimination, or threats.
- **My husband is in the category of 65 or older (birth date is 10/28/51), but DTE violates the spirit of senior protection rules by continuing to contact us and inferring an ability to shut us off even during the winter.** They also attempted installation just before November 1st to try to beat their deadline, even after we had told them several times we did not want a digital meter. That was followed by a robocall on December 12th and another letter on December 21, 2017.
- I have serious immune compromise and significant health conditions which are made worse by the constant **stress** of DTE's threats, independent of the smart meters themselves that DTE has installed in my neighborhood and surrounding areas.
- I experience incredible **stress** at the worry of having a smart meter forced upon my home, and the **catch 22** I am put in between taking a digital meter I do not want, or going without power. **This technology has been proven to be deleterious to health, but going without power is harmful as well.**
- My husband's business has been overcharged every month since smart meter, and has gone up significantly for no variable reason other than the meter change.

- DTE has a monopoly and leaves us in an **entirely vulnerable and compromised position**. We are **forced** to choose between two awful 'non-options', with **only the illusion of choice** where we can't leave to get power elsewhere. Where are we to turn?
- DTE continues to pressure my husband and me by having people show up with intent to install a smart meter, **continues to threaten us with electrical shut off, even though our electrical bill is paid in full every month**, and continues to attempt to coerce us into acceptance of installation of a digital smart meter (transmitter on) or digital opt-out meter (transmitter off). Our concerns with digital meters go well beyond transmitting.

Details:

Some of the Several Interactions with DTE relating to our home

Copies of written materials are attached

- **June 13, 2016:** DTE sent a **letter of intent to remove my perfectly and harmlessly functioning analog meter and replace it with a smart meter**. They enclosed a **brochure** which indicates that there are **NO health hazards associated with the new technology**. This is obviously an untruth. **SEE THE ATTACHMENT WHERE THEY ASSERT THIS.**
- **June 29, 2016:** I **sent a response to DTE** indicating my desire to retain my analog meter or some other meter that does not generate voltage transients and harmonics, transmit wirelessly, or have any antennas (whether or not the radio for those antennas is disabled). I indicated a willingness to allow them to meter my usage and I continue to allow that. Alternatively, **I could self read my meter** so they would not have that burden.
- **July 17, 2016:** DTE sent another letter indicating they may...**"shut off or terminate service..."**

DTE has a Monopoly:

- DTE is the only provider of residential electrical service in my area.
- This leaves me in an **entirely vulnerable and compromised position**.
- DTE is **treating me** (and my family) **unreasonably**, i.e., **if DTE were permitted to install a smart meter on my home, where would I go?** For a variety of reasons I can't live off grid, and most people can't either. Where is DTE'S promise to serve me, in exchange for their monopoly? See "My Health Conditions," below.

My Health Conditions:

- Among other things, I suffer with a condition called **Multiple Chemical Sensitivities**. I have largely **lost my ability to** safely work with clients and **easily move about in the world at large**, because of the chemicals people use to launder their clothes, wash their bodies, apply to their hair, clean their businesses, spray on their fields, use as furnishing and buildings supplies, etc. My world has gotten very small. **My home is my haven.**

- Many people with MCS also develop a condition known as **Electrosensitivity**. I am one such person. Some of the symptoms I experience are constant high-pitched sound in my ears, pain and pressure in my head, a buzzing in my body, discombobulating, disturbing, and sometimes "anxious" feeling in my body, unremitting insomnia, and tension, buzzing and hyper feeling in my heart, and more. Upon getting my first smart phone a couple years ago, I felt intense pain in my hands and arms and got an incredible headache within 5 minutes of use. Standing near a DECT cordless phone or use of computer with WiFi, etc., can cause me to feel a disturbance in my body resulting in onset of incredible weakness and more. I may be in the minority of people with these symptoms, but deserve a simple accommodation in this area by being able to keep an analog meter.

- If DTE were permitted to install a **DIGITAL** meter on my home, where would I go? What other environment, besides my own home, would be even remotely accommodating to my particular needs? How long would it take me to find it? How much would it cost in time, money, energy, and other resources? How far away would I be from my family? How ill would I become in the trying to find this other place, as I suffer through innumerable exposures, chemical- and EMF/RF-wise? How long would it take me to recover, once finally ensconced in this new safe haven, should I be able to find it?

Charges Not Consistent With Actual Use:

- A smart meter was forced upon my husband's business in September, 2017. Every month since then, he has been significantly overcharged and that matter remains unresolved months later, to date. He is making a separate submission and has attached bills to evidence this.
- Worth Township Hall, Sanilac County, received a bill for \$10,000 for one month of service. DTE was not able to give an explanation for, nor justify the outrageous charges. I cannot locate a copy of that bill, but I believe the historical monthly usage was around \$200.
- This causes me stress. I worry that my husband's business will be shut off anyway, because DTE apparently has a history of saying one thing, i.e., "Don't pay your bill until this discrepancy is resolved," and then soon after sending letters threatening shut-off, and finally then shutting off a person -- even though they were told to not pay their bill, and even when the overbilling matter is still not resolved.

As officials representing the people of the State of Michigan, it is vitally important that you look at all of the facts and conclude that DTE has a monopoly as a supplier of residential electricity in my area. They are abusing their power and mistreating consumers because they know we have no recourse. Their threats and actions provoke untold stress. We are not given a choice as to whom we wish to supply our homes and businesses with electrical power. We need you to hold DTE accountable for their bad acts and to stop discriminating against those who need to keep an analog. I want you to know of their stress causing actions. **ALSO, vote Yes for Analog Choice, HB 4220.**

Sincerely,

Linda Hearsch, 375 N. Sandusky Road, Sandusky MI 48471 (Sanilac County)



06/13/2016

AME**T025*2*AUTO**SCH 5-DIGIT 48471
DAVID HEARSCH AND LINDA HEARSCH
375 N SANDUSKY RD
SANDUSKY MI 48471-9156



Regarding: 375 N SANDUSKY RD SANDUSKY MI 48471-9156

Dear DTE Energy Customer:

In the next few weeks, DTE Energy will begin installing advanced metering in your area. This will include upgrading the electric meter at your home or business at no cost to you. In most cases, installation of the new electric meter is simple, requiring a brief, five-minute interruption to your electric service.

You do not need to be present for the meter upgrade, unless the meter is inside your home or business, or inaccessible. A clear path must be provided for us to gain access to our outside and inside metering equipment, which will require all obstructions or obstacles to be removed prior to the meter upgrade.

During the initial installation period, a meter reader will continue to read the meter until your neighborhood is fully upgraded. If you operate life-support or other sensitive equipment that DTE Energy may not be aware of, please contact us at 800-477-4747.

While you may not see a change in service initially, the benefits, as we continue to install the complete advanced metering system, include:

- Access to your energy usage information
- Automatic power outage detection
- Fewer estimated bills
- No need for us to enter your yard or business for meter reading
- Better integration of renewable energy sources

Be assured that the usage data obtained from the meter is fully encrypted and is only used for billing purposes. No personal data is collected or stored by the meter.

The Michigan Public Service Commission has approved a tariff allowing a non-transmitting meter provision commonly referred to as an Opt-Out Program for residential customers. Customers enrolled in the Opt-Out Program will have a non-transmitting, (radio off) digital meter installed and the following fees applied to their account:

- \$67.20 AMI Opt-Out Initial Fee
- \$9.80 AMI Opt-Out Monthly Charge

To enroll in the Opt-Out Program, please call 800.477.4747 to speak with a customer representative.

Our Advanced Metering program is creating the path to your home's energy future. For more information, please visit us online at dteenergy.com/advancedmeter. We look forward to providing you with this new technology and enhanced level of service.

Sincerely,

The Advanced Metering Team

Installation

The new electric meter or natural gas meter module will be installed by either a contractor working on our behalf or a DTE Energy employee. The installer will have identification that shows he or she is a representative of DTE Energy.

You do not need to be home if the electric and/or gas meter is outside and accessible. If the meter is inside your home, an adult must be present during installation.

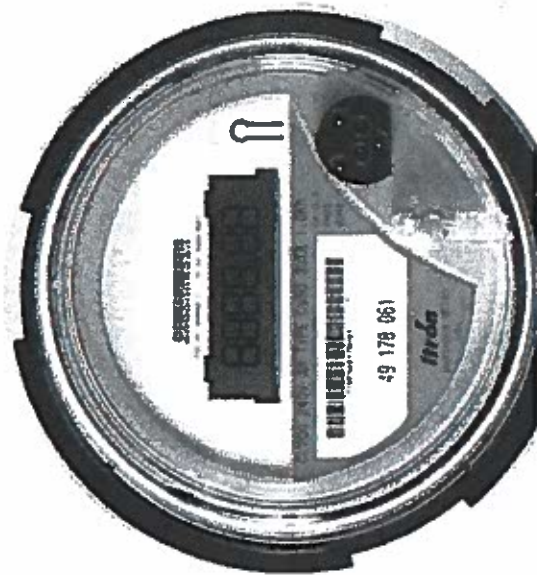
- Electric meter installation – A brief, approximately five-minute interruption of your power will occur.
- Natural gas module installation – No interruption of service is needed for installation of the natural gas meter module.

Meter reading

Until installation is complete in your area, a meter reader will continue to read the meter. Your billing cycle will not change.

The new advanced electric meter has a digital display instead of dials. To read the meter, simply look for the screen beginning with the code 004. This screen shows your kilowatt hour meter reading. The other displays show the meter communicating to our operating and billing systems over a secure radio network. A video describing how to read the new advanced electric meter is available on our website.

The method for reading the natural gas meter will not change.



How advanced metering works

The Meter

New advanced meters, which can be read remotely, are installed



Communications Network

The meter will transmit your energy usage information to us via a secure communication network.



Our Billing System

Meter data is sent to our billing system. Advanced metering technology will virtually eliminate estimated bills.



Your Energy Bill

Your monthly utility bill is generated using the information sent to our billing system.



Manage Your Energy Usage

Once installation in your area is complete, you will be able to monitor and manage your energy usage information online.



Frequently asked questions

Q. Will I have to pay for the new meter or module?

A. No, there is no charge for the meter or installation. If any electric or gas service issues exist on your customer-owned equipment, you will be responsible for the cost to fix the problem before the advanced meter installation can take place.

Q. Who is the installer and how can I be certain this person is authorized to do the work?

A. The new electric meter or natural gas meter module will be installed by a contractor working on behalf of DTE Energy or a DTE Energy employee. The installer will have identification that shows he or she is a representative of DTE Energy. You should immediately report to DTE Energy anyone posing as an installer who requests money for the meter, modules and/or installation. Call us at 800.477.4747.

Q. Are there any health hazards associated with the new technology?

A. No. The equipment operates at a low-power radio frequency, comparable to a cordless telephone. All equipment operates in compliance with state and federal communication standards.

Q. While reading the new meter, will DTE Energy have wireless access to any personal information, such as data stored on my home computer?

A. No, the network being installed will not give us access to your confidential personal information stored on your home computers. This technology does not invade your privacy, which we respect.



David and Linda Hearsch
375 N. Sandusky Road
Sandusky MI 48471-9156

June 29, 2016

Advanced Metering Team
DTE Energy Company
One Energy Plaza
Detroit, MI 48226

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

To DTE and the DTE Advanced Metering Team:

This letter is in response to your correspondence dated June 13, 2016.

I will participate in the opt-out program and pay all associated fees. However, I must keep my existing electric and gas meters. I must have my electricity and gas usage monitored by an analog meter or another meter that does not generate voltage transients and harmonics, transmit wirelessly, and have any antennas (whether or not the radio for those antennas is disabled). My meters work perfectly. They will continue to allow you to meter my electric and gas usage. Consumers Energy is allowing their customers to keep their analog meters if they so desire. Moreover, the Michigan Court of Appeals is hearing an appeal of the DTE opt-out program.

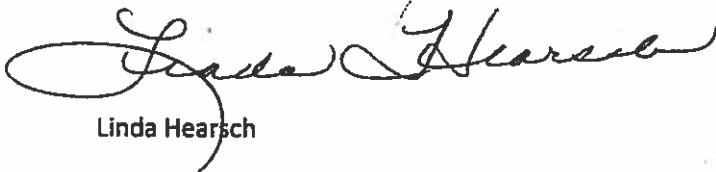
I expect a *written* reply to this correspondence.

I reserve the right to contest all aspects of the opt-out program. This letter does not waive any rights or arguments I may bring in court.

Sincerely,



David Hearsch



Linda Hearsch



07/12/2016

AM2**T031*2*****AUTO**3-DIGIT 484
DAVID HEARSCH AND LINDA HEARSCH
375 N SANDUSKY RD
SANDUSKY MI 48471-9156



Regarding: 375 SANDUSKY RD SANDUSKY MI 48471-9156

Dear DTE Electric Customer:

This letter is to inform you that we are replacing DTE's **electric** meters in homes and businesses in your area. These meters are being replaced at no cost to you and will only take a few minutes to install.

Our records indicate that a DTE field representative has attempted to gain access to our metering equipment to replace the meter at the above referenced site address. However, the field representative reported the meter replacement could not be completed because access to our metering equipment was refused.

The terms under which you take service authorizes DTE representatives to access your premises for a number of reasons, including but not limited to installing, inspecting, maintaining, reading and/or replacing its meters. Pursuant to Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) Rule 460.137 a utility may shut off or terminate service if the customer has refused to arrange access at reasonable times for the purpose of inspection, meter reading, maintenance, or replacement of equipment that is installed upon the premises, or for the removal of a meter.

The Michigan Public Service Commission has approved an Opt-Out Program for residential customers. Customers enrolled in the Opt-Out Program will have a non-transmitting, (radio off) digital meter installed and the following fees applied to their account:

- \$67.20 AMI Opt-Out Initial Fee
- \$9.80 AMI Opt-Out Monthly Charge

It is imperative that we gain access to our metering equipment and we need your cooperation. Please contact us at **1.800.477.4747** no later than **30 days from the date of the letter** to arrange access to our metering equipment. If you would like to enroll in the Opt-Out program, please inform the representative when you contact us. Whether you choose to enroll in the Opt-Out Program or not, we still need access to our metering equipment.

Thank you in advance for your immediate response and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Advanced Metering Team

DTE Energy Company
One Energy Plaza, Detroit, MI 48226-1221



DTE Energy

December 21, 2017

IMMEDIATE REPLY REQUESTED

**DAVID HEARSCH
375 N SANDUSKY RD
SANDUSKY, MI 48471**

Regarding: 375 N SANDUSKY RD, SANDUSKY, MI 48471

Dear : DAVID HEARSCH

Our records indicate that after multiple attempts we have not been able to complete the installation of our Advanced Metering equipment, which replaces our existing metering equipment at the above referenced address. This letter is to inform you that we are quickly approaching the completion of our Advanced Metering Project and the existing meter(s) at this site must be replaced.

As of today, DTE Energy has replaced over 3 million of its electric meters and gas modules and we anticipate completing all installations by mid-year 2018 . There is **no cost** to you for the meter replacement and the installation will only take a few minutes to complete. Please contact us at **313-235-4009** to schedule an appointment for the meter installation

Safety is our #1 priority and all customers receiving utility service from us must have a new approved DTE Energy meter installed by our authorized field representative.

We want you to know that we value you as a customer and will work with you to complete the meter replacement. Please be assured that DTE Energy has the highest regard for our customers and remains confident in the safety, security and benefits provided by our advanced meters. We are in full compliance with all federal, state and local laws and have been since the first advanced meter was installed in 2008.

Special short time offer for those that call now! Given that we are near the end of our installation program, if you call us prior to **January 05, 2018** to arrange for the meter upgrade, once the meter upgrade has been completed, you will receive a \$50 gift card as our way of saying thank you for being a valued DTE Energy customer.

If you are a residential customer and not interested in receiving the new transmitting (radio on) Advanced Meter, you can enroll in our Opt-Out Program by calling us at **313-235-4009**. This program allows for a non-transmitting (radio off) Advanced Meter to be installed and the following fees will be assessed to your account.

- \$67.20 AMI Opt-Out Initial Fee
- \$9.80 AMI Opt-Out Monthly Charge

Please note that DTE Energy is replacing all existing analog-meters and none can be retained by the customer.

For additional information about our Advanced Metering Program, visit www.dteenergy.com/advancedmeter.

Sincerely,

DTE Electric

